

A
SHORT ACCOUNT
OF
Mr. ROBERT LLOYD,
OF
MITCHAM;

Who died Nov. 29, 1760.

IN A
LETTER to a FRIEND.

Phil. iii. 7, 8.

*But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for
Christ.*

*Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the
excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

Prov. x.

The memory of the just is blessed.

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To the

Inhabitants of MITCHAM.

Brethren and Friends,

THE following pages, being (as you perceive by their purport) the substance of a letter to a friend, might not have appeared to public view, had not a venerable regard to the memory of so valuable a man, induced me to recommend the perusal of them to the inhabitants of this place.

Precious, indeed, in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints; their life also is an offering of a sweet smelling savour before him: and howsoever private and obscure the circumstances of his life had placed him, yet his conspicuous virtues so eminently distinguished him, and his salutary conversation rendered him so profitable and useful unto those around him, that we cannot but justly allow him a share in those characteristics, which are the indelible marks of the true disciples of Jesus, namely, That they are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth.

As these may fall into the hands of people of various and different sentiments, I shall, after the letter, take the liberty to add a few words to those who are yet alive and in, that considering the end of his conversation, we may earnestly desire to follow his faith, and the life of the righteous, we may die like him, and that our latter end may be like his.

46. 12. 17. 747



SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

DEAR SIR,

N E A R three years since, the death of Mrs. Phipps of Mitcham, engag'd me (contrary to the general bent of my inclination) to appear in publick; and in that little address, you may observe I deliver'd my sentiments, (in as concise a manner as I could) of the doctrines I inculcate, among the little company of people, that assemble together there: I also spoke of the effects they produc'd, both in the principles, and practices of those, who experienc'd them in life and in death, with their foundation in the blessed oracles of truth the sacred scriptures, and of their connection and consistence with the church of England: this I did, because some things were misrepresented, and some misunderstood, by those who it may be at times, were serious inquirers after truth; but nevertheless, I found that persons, as well as things, were liable to exceptions of various kinds, and that chiefly from those, who did not understand the nature of true religion, and the blessings it bestows on those who seek for it as for hid treasure; and notwithstanding concurrent witnesses bore testimony to the things there spoken, I found there were objectors against the facts, yea, even against the truth itself.

Indeed, there were some who were better satisfy'd with what was there recited, and tho' perhaps they have not follow'd with us, their objections have been remov'd from that very time, so that I have reason to hope, that little labour of love, has not altogether fallen to the ground.

As you fir, have at times freely inquir'd concerning my intercourse with that little company, I am the more ready to communicate my sentiments to you at this time as an affecting instance of divine providence, gives me an opportunity of laying before you, my thoughts on a point of importance, of the the which we have often convers'd together, and which is peculiarly remarkably in the life and death of him, whom I propose to make the subject of my present epistle.

Within a short space of time, God has, in the course of his providence visited that small company, and has been taking to himself the souls of his servants, and delivering them from the burden of flesh into joy and felicity: and I have always found, that those who have thus dy'd have according to that measure and degree of grace they had attain'd, witnessed a good confession in their last moments and bore testimony to the love of Jesus, that he was able to save, as in life, so in death; but nevertheless some have urg'd their former character, as an argument against their present profession, while others who have admitted the power of true saving grace, to be eminently display'd, whenever it was exerted in converting a sinner from the error of his ways, and turning him from darkness unto light, yet they could not conceive, how it was possible, for a man of an exact form of religion to be ignorant of the real knowledge of Jesus Christ, or be void of true saving faith in his heart.

The instance before us, is an undeniable proof of this comfortable doctrine, immoveably founded in the word of God, and strengthen'd by all genuine christian experience, namely, That a man is sav'd by grace thro' faith alone, contra-distinguish'd from, tho' not contrary to good works.

That this doctrine is maintain'd in the gospel, is too evident to need any further proof; there we find our Lord continually declaring the efficacious power of faith, sufficient to save in opposition to all the boasted

forms, and specious pretensions, of even the most strictest sects among the Jews : to mention one instance among many, where our Lord, according to his condescending familiarity with his followers, introduces a parable, as he sat at meat in the house of Simon the Pharisee, of the debtor of five hundred, and the debtor of fifty pence, and when they had nothing to pay he frankly forgave them both ; the inference from which is obvious to every attentive reader, that their acceptance was according to their acknowledg'd transgressions, and their faith in him ; and thus without depreciating the one, or exalting the other, the soul that believ'd was Justified, or acquitted, from all the guilt of, and punishment due to those offences, from which it could not be justify'd, by any antecedent righteousness, however great in its appearances, or punctual in its performances, thus, Whosoever believ'd on his name, without any regard to works, past, present, or to come, had eternal life abiding in him, and thus, all that believe in him should not perish, but have everlasting life, with many other gracious declarations of the same import, to quote which passages would be to transcribe the gospel, and to prove what is so evidently plain, that he who runs may read.

And did his immediate followers know any other way of acceptance with God, or access to his favour ? nay, we find the whole purport of their mission contain'd, and they continually cry'd, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved : and this they always laid, as the foundation of all real, experimental christianity, even faith in his name, who is the Saviour of sinners, and that taketh away the sins of the world.

And from those ages down to the present day, this important article has always stood, as an impregnable bulwark against the aspiring doctrine of merit : an instance of it, we have in that blessed event of the reformation of our own church, from the dregs of popish corruption : and in support thereof, the noble

martyrs of our nation gladly seal'd this precious trust with their blood; and in their expiring moments, confessed they were sav'd, through the all-sufficient merits of Jesus Christ, and that he alone is the fountain and foundation of all our hope.

The great apostle St. Paul, who well knew the mind of the Holy Ghost, gloried in this method of salvation, as we may read at large in the accounts of his preaching, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and in all his epistles, especially in that to the Romans; and attentive survey of which I would beg leave to recommend to your most serious consideration, and doubt not, but by the divine assistance, you will there find such demonstrative evidence, that you will readily acknowledge, That to him that worketh not, but believeth on God that justifyeth the ungodly; his faith is counted to him for righteousness: that salvation is not of works but of grace: otherwise grace is no more grace: and indeed to all the churches of his day, we find him insisting, that faith alone, in the name of Jesus Christ, is the grand instrument of our salvation.

A personal instance of this interesting truth, he gives us in himself, in his epistle to the church at Phillipi; where, having enumerated all his claims to righteousness, in a strict conformity to the religion of his fathers, in an unexceptionable obedience, to the laws and ordinances of the Jewish religion, according to the strictest sect of the Pharisees, and animated with a zeal for God, through which he profitted beyond many of his brethren, yet all these he counted but dung and dross, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, gladly submitting them all to the righteousness of faith, that he might thereby obtain an inheritance incorruptible, and be found in him, who gave him to fight the good fight of faith, and to lay hold on eternal life.

And is there wanting any proof of this in our day? nay verily: many living and dying witnesses have I seen of this happy truth; but in none a stronger, and

clearer evidence, than in the case of Mr. Robert Lloyd, who now rests from his labours. A man, of whom you had some knowledge, and with whom I have had friendship and intimacy, for about fifteen years past : what respects his character as a religious man, I believe the inhabitants of Mitcham, among whom he first drew his breath, and continu'd till he was deliver'd from the burden of this mortal life will readily acknowledge : as with what circumspection he walk'd in the ordinances of God, and how unexceptionably he liv'd amongst them, with regard to himself in his private affairs, and in his publick dealings towards those around him, his strict regard to the sabbath, his diligent searching the scriptures, his frequent retirements of prayer, of meditation, his constant attendance in the great congregation, his so often encompassing the altar, and drawing nigh unto the table of the Lord, to receive those sacred mysteries ; with the reproofs, admonitions and instructions, which he continually administred, I say, let his nearest relatives, and most distant acquaintance bear witness unto.

But when he heard the gospel proposed in the view abovemention'd, and that a man might be found abounding in all these things, and ye remain ignorant with regard to true saving faith, he earnestly sought a better knowledge, and never rested, till he found that redemption which is in Jesus, even the forgiveness of all his sins : he then truly saw, that even the most perfect conformity to the divine law supposing he could perform it, could never intitle him to any reward, or atone for the smallest sin which he had committed, much less translate him, from that state of wrath and condemnation in which he was born, into a state of present salvation : this he saw, was only attainable by faith in Jesus Christ ; to this he gladly submitted, and all those things which before were gain to him, he chearfully counted loss that he might win Christ and be found in him, not having his own righteousness, which was of the law, but the righteousness of Jesus Christ, even the righteousness

which is of God by faith, and on this foundation he raised his future behaviour, labouring, through the grace given unto him, to have that righteousness so imputed unto him, implanted in him : and the Power and grace of God he found mighty to save, not only from the guilt, but also from the power of sin ; then he found, true religion was the source of inward comfort and satisfaction, and that it not only imparted peace, and joy, and love, but also enabled him to mortify every corrupt affection, every foolish and vain desire, and daily to bear his cross, after an humble and self denying Saviour.

The righteousness of faith then, consider'd in this point of view, and when oppos'd to the righteousness of the law, is the power of an endless life brought into the soul ; whereby the christian believer, being begotten by the incorruptible word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever, he goes on from strength to strength, and from grace to grace, till he can truly say, Now I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me, and the life [which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

From the time he began to experience the powerful and blessed effects of the gospel, he continued walking in all the ways of the Lord, evincing the truth of what he inwardly felt, by the outward holiness of his life, and the unblameableness of his conversation ; doing and suffering the will of God, until the shadows of the evening gather'd round him, and when the voice of the Bridegroom call'd him to arise, and go hence, he was found ready, his disorder was attended, with a kind of drowsing and sleepiness, tho' perfectly sensible to the last moment of his life, and at intervals of time, when he was capable of speaking, he was ready to tender the same exhortation as he had always done.

I visited him two days before his departure, when he lay calmly resigned unto the will of God ; he told me he had no doubt nor fear, but was confident that he

who had begun the good work, would finish it before he went hence: his answer, to the loving and tender regards of his wife were, that she should look unto the Lord, and patiently submit unto his will: words how short, and yet how full and comprehensive! and to the dutifull and affectionate tears of his children were, that they should press on in the way of righteousness, and they should receive of the Lord a crown of glory.

It is observable, that at other times when afflicted or disorder'd, he was somewhat hurry'd in his mind, but now he was intirely calm and compos'd, having nothing to do but to lay down his head and to die in peace: as to the means of grace, he said, he knew in themselves they were nothing, the blood of Christ had done, and would do all for him,

Thus when melted in the flame

Of love, this was his only plea,

I the chief of sinners am,

But Jesus dy'd for me.

Thus he continu'd full of grace, and full of faith, waiting to receive the end thereof, even the eternal, salvation of his soul, until he slept in Jesus; and as a ripe shock of corn coming in in his season, he was gather'd into the garner, the paradise of God, leaving behind him an example worthy of imitation, even

The calm still Wonder, of a well spent life.

I suppose after all that has been said, you will not urge the blind, the common objection, "that if "faith is thus the grand instrument of salvation, then "there is no more necessity for Works." This is unanswerably refuted, by the practical experience, and unblameable conduct of our deceas'd friend, for altho' he knew the insufficiency of all the works of piety and charity, springing from, and exercised with the most kind and amiable tempers and affections, with regard to their merit in the sight of God; yet he also knew, that those who believed, must be careful to maintain good works, and therefore the best proof he

could give, of that divine principle of faith which so powerfully wrought within him, was an holy and loving obedience, to the will of his heavenly Father; continually crying, my Father worketh hitherto, and I work: thus faith wrought together with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect, therefore, when the doctrine of faith, is proposed in this light, and experienced in this comfortable and beneficial manner, the faithful soul, may reflect with pleasure on a life well spent, founded on faith in the blood of Jesus; and we may say with boldness to all objectors, do we make void the law thro' faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law.

O my dear friend, blessed are they, who *thus* do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in thro' the gates into the city. Let us give all diligence to add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in us and abound, they make us, that we shall neither be barren, nor unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, for so an entrance shall be ministred unto us abundantly, into his everlasting kingdom, which is,

Dear Sir,

The earnest prayer and most sincere desire
 London Of yours, in all cordial affection,
 Dec. 6. 1760. JOHN HARLEY.

I Shall now beg leave, to address a few words unto those, who by relation, friendship, or any other tie, were united to, or connected with our deceased friend.

And first, unto you the widdow'd partner of his former joys, let this afflictive circumstance be an awful and solemn admonition sounding in your ears, "be ye also ready," that having so intimately shar'd in

his kind affections, and fervent prayers, and being partaker of the same grace of life, you may follow on in the way that he is gone before you, till ye heighten each others joys, in those regions of eternal felicity,

Where sorrow, and parting, and death are no more.

You his rising offspring, who from your earliest remembrance, can testify his parental regard, both for your temporal, and eternal welfare, let not the vain and trifling amusements, nor the ensnaring temptations of an insidious world, ever lessen your regard for truth, or obliterate from your minds his exemplary pattern; but let your constant attachment to his counsel, be the best proof you can give, of the regard you pay to the memory of so good a father; let his living advices, and his dying admonitions, bear such obedient and conforming characters, in your lives and conversations, that he being dead, may yet live, and speak, in your future behaviour and conduct.

You his brethren and companions, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, who more immediately associated with him, hold fast the beginning of your confidence, steadfast even unto the end; be ye not slothful, but followers of him, who *thus* thro' faith and patience, hath inherited the promises; let his constancy and steadfastness, encourage and animate, your diligence and zeal, that having your loins girt, and your lamps burning, and ye yourselves as men that wait for the Bridegroom, ye may, whensoever he calleth for you, be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless,

In perfect holiness renew'd

Adorn'd with Christ and meet for God.

But more especially you, who have once known the way of righteousness, who have seen the loving kindness of the Lord, and have once tasted that he was gracious: you who have sinned against light and love, and have done despite unto the spirit of grace, and are now miserably unhappy thro' your departure from him; O return, return unto the God of your life:

Fly Sinners, fly, into those arms
Of everlasting love.

The Lord now waits that he may be gracious, and
you may now find him ready to heel all your Back-
slidings, and again to love you freely.

And unto you that mourn in Sion, what consolation of hope ! that the Lord condescends in his great
mercy, to give you both living and dying witnesses, of
the truth of his grace, and of the riches of his goodness : O, never doubt of his gracious compassion towards you, for like as a father pitieth his own children, so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear him ; blessed then are they that mourn for Jesus, for they shall be comforted.

You also, among whom his lot was sometimes promiscuously, always providentially cast, either by business or otherways ; remember his reproofs, remember his exhortations, remember his intercourse among you, and tho' you could not but revere the counsel he gave, and the example he set you, yet if in your jesting hours you have ever counted his life madness, O remember to you lasting conviction that he is now number'd among the blest, and his lot is among the saints.

Seeing then, that the faithful soul is thus happy in life and in Death, in time and in eternity ; let us seek the Lord while he may be found, let us call upon him while he is near : let us, thro' his grace, cast away our transgressions, and put away our sins ; let us cry unto him, until we are partakers of like precious Faith, even that faith which is of the operation of his Spirit, which reforms the life, and purifies the heart, that so believing, and so working, we may joyfully remember, to our eternal comfort, " Blessed are the dead who *thus* die in the Lord, even so saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them."

F I N I S.